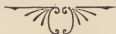


The
Armenian
Question



By LYMAN ABBOTT

TESTIMONY OF A UNITED STATES CONSUL.

I want to make an appeal to you, and, through you, to others, on behalf of the thousands of children made orphans by the massacres of last year. A conservative estimate places the number at fifty thousand. Think of it, fifty thousand children and in most cases without a male relative in the world; their fathers, mothers, and all belonging to them slain, and their only hope of living, the charity of strangers. Thousands so young and helpless that of necessity they must die, but thousands that can and should be saved. Thousands of boys and girls thrown upon the streets and hundreds of girls outraged and then cast adrift. In passing through villages burned and almost destroyed you meet girls weeping and shrieking "We are defiled, we are defiled; our fathers and mothers have been killed and we are become vagrants! What shall we do? Whither shall we go? To whom shall we turn for protection? Help us or we die!" Our missionaries in Erzerum, Van, Bitlis and Harpoot can give hundreds of these girls homes where they will be carefully brought up and taught an occupation that will make of them good and useful women, thus saving them from the brutality of man. Thousands can be assisted in other ways. I am a poor hand at begging, but you can see the awful, pitiful condition of these children, and I know you will do what you can to save them.

Most sincerely yours,

LEO BERGHOLZ, *U. S. Consul.*

ERZERUM, Turkey in Asia.

NOTE.—All contributions for this object should be sent to Brown Bros. & Co., 59 Wall Street, New York, marked "For the Orphan Fund of the National Armenian Relief Committee." For further information, and literature for free distribution, apply to Frederick D. Greene, Secretary, 118 Bible House, New York.

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION.*

BY LYMAN ABBOTT.

"And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply."—Judges viii., 1.

THE Children of Israel were not at this time a nation. They were twelve separate peoples, each with its separate territory. The Midianites, neighboring pagans, had oppressed some of these tribes. Gideon had gathered the tribes together and gone to war against Midian. Three hundred men had put the great Midianite army to flight. Ephraim had not been called on to share, and Ephraim complained. Why have you treated us thus? said this stalwart, brave little tribe. We wanted a share in this honorable warfare. You have dealt with us unfairly.

Men tell us that this book of the Judges describes a barbarous time—and so it does: and that its notions are barbarous notions—so some of them are; but I think to-day, as one looks on the map of Europe and at the attitude of the so-called Christian Powers of Europe, he may well question whether Christendom in the nineteenth century might not learn something from Judaism in the days of the Judges. He who is practically, though not nominally, the pagan of the East is persecuting Christians in Turkey with a rancor, a bitterness, a devotion of hate absolutely never equaled before in the history of the world, and the Christian Powers are not taking counsel with one another how they may put a stop to it, but each Power

* Sermon preached at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., Sunday, November 15, 1896. Reported stenographically by Henry Winans, and revised by the author.

is interfering with every other Power's interference ; each Power, in its jealousy of other Powers, forbids war against the pagan for the protection of the Christian.

I have not spoken to you before on the Armenian problem because I have not wished to stir your emotions, or my own, fruitlessly, and speak to-day only because I think I have a little light in answer to the question, What can we do? and wish to point out to you, not what is the duty of England or Russia or Germany, but the duty of America and Americans.

In the first place, we ought to know the facts. The fact is that the persecution of Christians in Armenia is the worst, the most cruel, the most barbarous religious persecution the world has ever seen. It is estimated that two thousand Christians were slain in the persecutions of Diocletian ; that between five and six thousand Protestants were put to death under the persecutions of Torquemada in Spain ; that thirty thousand were slain in the massacre of St. Bartholomew ; that a hundred thousand Protestants were put to death in the wars of the Duke of Alva against the house of Orange—but that includes those who were slain in open battle. Those who have perished in Turkish Armenia in the last four years nearly, if not quite, equal the sum total of all those slain in previous persecutions. Eight thousand seven hundred and fifty is the number officially reported as massacred in three or four days in Constantinople itself, while some estimates put the total number of massacred men, women, and children at the present time since 1894 at one hundred thousand. And this is probably an underestimate.

I would not, if I could, recite the horrors of these persecutions ; I would not repeat the tale of blood ; I would not recount the monstrosities, the cruelties,

which have accompanied them. I am not here to stir your blood to feverish heat. I try to keep my own moderately and reasonably cool while I speak to you on this crime of the centuries. I desire to give light, not heat.

In the second place, we ought to know that this persecution is not the result of sporadic acts of mob violence. We ought to know that it is a definite, pronounced, established policy, patiently, persistently, remorselessly pursued. We ought to know that the causes of it are partly race hatred, partly trade jealousy, partly religious animosity. We ought to know that the Turk in Turkey is not synonymous with the Mohammedan, any more than American is synonymous with Christian. The word Turk is significant of a race ; the word Mohammedan is significant of a religion. The word American is significant of a race ; the word Christian is significant of a religion. Most Americans are Christians—that is, they are not pagans ; and most Turks are Mohammedans—that is, they are not Christians ; but the Turk may or may not be a Mohammedan, as the American may or may not be a Christian.

In his birthplace and cradle the Turk is Asiatic. He came to Europe centuries ago with his drawn scimitar. He came murdering and to murder, plundering and to plunder. He came a barbarian, a robber, a brigand, and he has stayed in Europe ever since, a robber, a murderer, and a brigand. He is as barbaric to-day in the heart of him as he was in the centuries gone by. Whatever evolution has done for other races, it has not done anything for him. He is a Turk still. The Turkish Empire is composed of heterogeneous populations under the subjection of the scimitar of the Turk. He has never made any attempt whatever to affiliate

these populations, to bring them into fellowship with himself, or to do them equal justice: he has simply held them by the throat with one hand, while he has rifled their pockets with the other. The Turkish Empire has used its power simply in taxing men; and it has taxed them, not that it might give them a good government, but that it might rob them for its own purposes. It is true that the Turkish order is a government, and it is true that the American order is a government, but it is a misnomer to use the same word for both. The object of the American Government is to protect the life and liberty of all its citizens. That is not the intent of the Turk. The idea of the Turk is the idea of the old Roman imperialism—subjugate the province, that you may take as much out of it as possible.

Now, this Turk has seen, in successive years these subject populations improving in spite of him. They have grown wiser, more intelligent, more virtuous, more prosperous. He has seen the Greek and the Nestorian and the Syrian and the Bulgarian, and now the Armenian, enter into places of profit, of industry, of advantage, and his race hatred has been intensified by his trade jealousy. This massacre of the Armenians is not a new thing in Turkish history. "In 1822 not less than 50,000 Greeks were massacred in the islands of the Ægean Sea; in 1850 10,000 Nestorians were butchered around the headwaters of the Tigris; in 1860, 11,000 Maronites and Syrians perished in Mount Lebanon and Damascus; in 1876 upwards of 15,000 were slaughtered in Bulgaria." That is the Turk. That is what he has been doing all the time.

And this race prejudice, this trade jealousy, have been intensified and embittered by what we are pleased to call his religion. What is religion? If it is conse-

cration, devotion, enthusiasm, regardless of the One to whom the consecration is made, regardless of the object of devotion, regardless of that which excites the enthusiasm, then the Turk is religious. Then the Phœnicians, who inspired themselves to lust by their religious rites and caused their own children to be sacrificed to their cruel gods, were as religious as the Israelites. Then Torquemeda, in lighting the torch and presiding over the tortures of the Inquisition, was as religious as the men who burned beneath the flames or were tortured on the rack. Then the Duke of Alva, with his unsheathed sword putting thousands and tens of thousands to death on the plains of Holland, was as religious as William of Orange fighting for patriotism and his native land. Then Catherine de Medici summoning to *Te Deums* over the slain was as religious as the massacred martyrs whose bodies filled the streets of the European metropolis.

Religion is of two kinds—the aggressive and the non-aggressive. And of the aggressive religions there are two—the Mohammedan and the Christian. The Jewish religion did not seek to make converts ; it simply built a wall around itself and protected itself from other religions. The Brahmanical religion does not seek to make converts ; all the Brahmans desire is to be left alone. But the Christian and the Mohammedan religions do seek to make converts. The one does it by the cross, the other by the sword ; the one by love, the other by hate ; the one by assimilation, the other by subjugation ; the one does it for the purposes of service, the other does it for the purposes of selfishness. Now, you may call them both religion if you like, but they are as far apart as heaven is from hell.

Says James Freeman Clarke in his account of Mo-

hammedanism: "When God—so runs the tradition—I had better said the blasphemy—resolved to create the human race, he took into his hands a mass of earth, the same whence all mankind were to be formed, and in which they after a manner pre-existed; and, having then divided the clod into two equal portions, he threw the one half into hell, saying, 'These to eternal fire, and I care not;' and projected the other half into heaven, adding, 'And these to Paradise, and I care not.'" That is the theology of the Mohammedan. That is the God who is the center of their religion. Calvinism was serene and lovely and a flowering spring as compared with the theology of Mohammedanism, which is based upon a faith in a remorseless God who cares not whether this half the human race lives in eternal torment and this half in everlasting paradise. The Mohammedan religion knows nothing of the fatherhood of God, and it knows as little of the other fundamental truths of Christianity. "Stress is laid on prayer, ablution, fasting, almsgiving, and the pilgrimage to Mecca. Wine and gaming are forbidden. There is no recognition, in the Koran, of human brotherhood. It is a prime duty to hate infidels and make war on them. Mohammed made it a duty for Moslems to betray and kill their own brothers when they were infidels; and he was obeyed in more cases than one."

Thus we have these three elements together in the Turkish heart: first, race prejudice; second, trade jealousy; and, third, religious rancor and hate. The Mohammedan knows only one way by which to extend his religion—this: kill the men, kill the women, kill the older children, and educate the babes into Mohammedans. Mohammedanism has never varied from its first starting-point in Asia. It has always run this one consistent course: a persecuting power because it is an aggressive power, believing in a God of indifference, making a worship of lust and cruelty.

Now, we ought to know these facts. We have no right to shut our eyes to them. We have no right to be ignorant of them. And, knowing them, we ought

to be intolerant of all apologies, excuses, distinctions, or eulogies. I mean exactly what I say—*intolerant*. I hate the tolerance that is indifferent respecting moral character and moral distinctions. I hate the tolerance that knows no difference between virtue and vice, cruelty and humanity, honor and dishonor, courage and cowardice. Purity ought to be intolerant of impurity. Honesty ought to be intolerant of dishonesty. Heroism ought to be intolerant of cowardice. Love ought to be intolerant of hate. Consider for a moment the defenses offered for the murdering, massacring Turk. The Armenian has provoked it all : it is all his fault. O Æsop, come to life again, and tell us the story of the Lamb and the Wolf ! I have heard this charge before : negroes provoking the massacres of the Ku Klux Klan in the South, and always the negroes the victims, and always the white men safe. How many Turks have been killed by Armenians ? Whose sword is red with blood ? The lamb has devoured the wolf. The lamb has muddied the water the wolf was drinking. The Turk is a gentleman ! Ah, this Turk is a gentlemen ! I have met that, too, before. This corrupt politician, it is true, bribes congresses, buys votes, manipulates primaries, miscounts votes—he does all that ; but then he is a good father, and he is a good husband, he does not beat his wife, and he does not maltreat his children ! This Turk has killed Christians—unoffending Christians—by the thousands and the tens of thousands, but he is a gentleman. Yes, so Mephistopheles is a gentleman. So the Duke of Queensberry was a gentleman ; in his veins putridity instead of pure blood, but he was one of the finest gentlemen of England. Probably the Duke of Alva was a gentleman. Doubtless, Torquemada was a gentleman. O Rachel, Rachel, mourning for thy children and will not be comforted, for they are not, weep not. Herod is a gentleman ! O Armenian exile, with thy cottage in ashes, and thy wife violated before thine eyes, be not wrathful : if he that did it was not a gentleman, he that set him on was one ! O childless widow, who cannot close thine eyes in sleep without seeing thy husband brained before thine eyes and his blood spattered on thy robes, weep

not: he that did it was a gentleman! And we hear these things and our blood does not boil!

But the persecutor is religious. And he has as much enthusiasm for his religion as the Christian has for his religion. The Christian missionary believes in his religion of the Cross, and this Turk believes in his religion of the Crescent. Why sit in judgment between them? Fanaticism harnesses its two steeds of lust and cruelty, flings the reins of self-restraint upon their backs, lashes them with the devil's own conscience, and as the wheels go over the crunching bodies of its victims, tolerance stands by the side of the course, takes off its hat, and honors—religion! We ought to know the facts, and in the knowledge of those facts we ought to be intolerant of every excuse and apology that is made for them.

We, as an American nation, can do something more than know the facts, and something more than feel rightly about them. We either ought with the whole power of our Government to protect American citizens on Turkish soil, or we ought frankly, publicly, openly, to declare that we have not the strength to do it, and call our Ambassador home.

Nations, like individuals, are sometimes too weak to do what they ought to do if they were strong enough. Poland could not resist Russia. But we ought to look the question fairly in the face. We have in Turkey over two hundred Americans engaged in what is ordinarily regarded as lawful business. I know they are missionaries; I know they are teachers; I know they have not gone there to make money. They are not consecrated to the work of getting on in the world. That much may be said against them. But still Americans generally will recognize the fact that a man who has gone to another country, inspired by a desire to aid the men, women, and children there, is entitled to as much protection as the man who goes there to sell them scimitars or rum. I am not going to enter into the question to-day whether the missionary service is right and wise, or wrong and unwise. It is an honest and an honorable vocation, and Americans have gone into it. We have 621 schools, including five colleges. We have 27,400 pupils in those

schools. We are spending half a million dollars a year in the work of civilization. Those are American interests. I will not say Christian interests ; I will not say missionary interests. They are American interests. And the men engaged in this work are entitled to have this country say one of two things—either, We cannot protect you, you are at your own risk, or else, God helping us, we will spend our last dollar and our last man, but we will protect you. And that is what I would like to have the United States say. We are strong enough to think of putting back on her throne in Hawaii a recreant queen who had undertaken to tear in tatters the constitution. We are strong enough to say to Great Britain, The interests of Venezuela are our own ; you must not encroach on them. We are strong enough to threaten war when there is a possible danger to a few American interests in a South American republic. But we let our property be burned, our schools and colleges be closed, our men and women live in terror of their lives, and have as yet done nothing more than present a gentle protest.

In 1815 the Algerian pirates had for twenty years been preying on the commerce of Christendom in the Mediterranean Sea, and the Christian Powers did not dare to do anything to prevent them, because England had made a treaty by which practically she pledged herself not to interfere, that France might be injured. Each government was afraid to interfere with the *status quo*, and the commercial interests were helpless. In 1815 this then little United States said, We will stand this no longer. We had stood it ; we had paid thousands of dollars in ransoms for the American. We had submitted because we could not help ourselves. But when the War of 1812 closed, we sent out one of our commodores ; we engaged the fleet of Algiers, we defeated it ; we took the chief robber, the Sultan of Algiers ; we made him there give his submission ; we made him there pay back damages ; and the robbers were swept from the Mediterranean Sea. O for an America like the America of 1815 ! I believe myself that if this American Government were to say to Turkey, You shall not threaten the peace, the prosper-

ity, the lives, the well being of American citizens on your soil—you shall not—I believe if America were to say that to the murdering, massacring Turk, America could do to-day what America did in the same section of the globe in 1815. And if a gun was fired at our flag, or a drop of American blood was shed, that gun would unite all America, as the guns on Sumter united the North, and that blood would cement in one great national party all Americans, as the blood that reddened the streets of Baltimore united all the North, and this Nation would move to the consummation of its purpose, unbroken, a united people; and the conscience of Europe would respond. It is not true that Germany or France or England or Austria would set itself up in armed defense of murder, when the United States Government, having no territory to acquire, no prestige to win, no advantage to gain, no balance of power in Europe to break, had interposed and said, "This crime shall go on no more."

There is another thing we can do. We can follow the precedent of 1824. In 1822 the Turks were massacring the Greeks. The Greeks were not like lambs led to the slaughter. They unsheathed their swords and rose in rebellion. There was a revolution against Turkish authority in Greece; and then, as now, all the Christian Powers kept off. Every Power was jealous of every other Power. Christian Powers, we call them! What is a Christian Power? You remember in "Faust" how men with raised swords in the form of a cross advance upon Mephistopheles, and before the raised cross he retreats and falls upon the ground, apparently vanquished by the mere symbol. Ah! it is a pretty picture, but it is not a true one. The devil does not retreat before the mere raised cross. A Power is not made a Christian Power because it has cathedrals with crosses on them, or crosses on the priests' robes, or crosses on the breasts of the women, or crosses on the covers of prayer-books. The cross in the heart and in the life makes a man a Christian; the cross in the heart makes a nation Christian. Only those Powers are Christian that dare risk something, that dare endure something, for Christ's sake and for humanity's sake. These Chris-

tian Powers did not dare in 1824 ; they do not dare now. Then it was that one of America's greatest statesmen pronounced one of his most statesmanlike utterances. He called on America to issue its protest against the wickedness that was oppressing Greece. I read from Daniel Webster :

The time has been, indeed, when fleets and armies and subsidies were the principal reliances even in the best cause. But, happily for mankind, a great change has taken place in this respect. Moral causes come into consideration in proportion as the progress of knowledge is advanced ; and the public opinion of the civilized world is rapidly gaining an ascendancy over mere brutal force. It is already able to oppose the most formidable obstruction to the progress of injustice and oppression ; and as it grows more intelligent and more intense, it will be more and more formidable. It may be silenced by military power, but it cannot be conquered. It is elastic, irrepressible, and invulnerable to the weapons of ordinary warfare. It is that impassable, inextinguishable enemy of mere violence and arbitrary rule which, like Milton's angels,

Vital in every part,
Cannot, but by annihilating, die.

Last spring our Congress passed resolutions of protest against the Turkish atrocities in Armenia. They were sent to the President of the United States. He was to communicate them to the Powers—the Christian Powers—of Europe. Is there any man in this audience who knows whether he has done it or not? If he has, he has not let his right hand know what his left hand has done. Those resolutions should have been so uttered to the Christian Powers of Europe that the sound of our voice would have gone round the world. We ought not to have spoken our condemnation of wholesale massacre in a whisper—we should have spoken it with thunder tones. At least we may speak to the consciences of mankind. It is time we did.

Finally, we can afford relief and succor to those who have suffered from this wholesale persecution. We can open our gates to all fugitive Armenians. I do not find fault with our Administration that it closed them the other day and left the fugitives waiting on Ellis Island until bonds should be given. It is not the business of the Administration to make laws or set them aside. But we should so alter our immigration laws as to provide clearly, definitely, and positively that this land is the harbor for the politically oppressed

of all countries, however empty their purses, and we ought to reach out a helping hand to the widows and the orphans on Turkish soil.

The American Board has indicated the presence of a statesman as its practical administrative head in its ready adaptation of its methods to the changed conditions. I received last week a letter from its Foreign Secretary, Dr. James L. Barton,* saying that it is proposed to take the dismantled and unoccupied houses of the Armenians and gather in them, so far as it can be done, the orphans whom the Turkish scimitar has spared, under the care of Armenian widows, and thus save the girls from the harem and the boys from beggary, and both, by Christian education, to the faith of their fathers.

I am proud of the Christian ministry. I thank God to-day that in all this time of terrible torture and horrible experience not one single man or woman in the missionary service in Turkey has fled. Our own American Minister there has advised them to leave their posts; such counsels have gone to them from America; but one and all they have said, We will stay with those who are themselves martyrs for our faith; we will live with them; if need be, we will die with them. The Christian Church can at least do this: It can say to every brave Christian Minister and every brave Christian woman in Turkey, You are right; stay where you are; our prayers shall go with you; our contributions shall go with you; our help to the enlargement of your work shall go with you. If I were both Government and Church, I would buy every house in Armenian Turkey that could be bought; I would wrap the American flag around it, or hoist the American flag above it; I would gather as many orphan children and as many widows into those homes as I could; and I would say to the massacring Turk, You lay your finger on one of them at your peril.

What will Plymouth Church do? How many such homes will it take? For how many orphans will it provide? What word of greeting will it send across the sea to its martyred kinsmen in Christ?

* See this letter, published in full in *The Outlook* for November 21, page 924.

HOW THE REFUGEES WERE SAVED.

BY ELLEN KNIGHT BRADFORD.

The sun had dropped low down the Western sky,
When a ship at her anchor lay straining close by
Old Smyrna, the land where Homer once sung,
Where Cybele ruled when the gods were young.
The British ship Boyne, with her fragrant freight
From the land of the olive, the fig and the date,
Was waiting her papers, when over the hills,
Grown red with the blood that the Moslem spills,
Came the noise of the conflict—the cloudburst of pain,
That told yet again of Armenia's slain !

Redoubling his watch, the brave Captain espied*
A frail little bark close to starboard side
Of his own great ship, while an aged man
By terror made fleet, up the gangway ran.
"O, Captain, good Captain, have mercy," cried he,
"Six others are with me, O, put out to sea—
Away from this hell and the Turk's bloody hand,
O, carry us anywhere far from this land !"

The blood of the Briton within him was stirred.
"Aboard with them, drift their boat loose," was his word
To his mate. To his steward, "Now give them relief
In the shape of a meal on our good British beef."
The words were scarce uttered when, scenting their prey,
Twelve broad-turbaned Turks rushed up the gangway,
And one of them gruffly, "Now give us," cried he,
"The Armenians aboard, ere you put out to sea."

Then up spoke the Captain, "No, never will I
While the British flag floats o'er my ship, I will die.
And so will my men, every man of my crew,
Before we'll surrender these victims to you."
They insisted, entreated and talked themselves hoarse,
And swore if denied them they'd take them by force.
The limit of time they would fix at next day
Precisely at sunrise, and then rowed away.

Alone in the harbor, no friendly ship nigh,
With night on the water and clouds in the sky,
The Briton bethought him of help down the bay,
Where at anchor a cruiser from Italy lay.
So he manned up his gig and he muffled his oars,
And out in the darkness, away from the shores
Of Smyrna he sailed till he lay at the last
Where the ship of King Humbert her anchor had cast.

Then he spoke to her captain, "Commander," quoth he,
"I have here refugees from Armenia with me ;
In the name of the flag of my country, and more,
In the name of humanity, help I implore !"
"I am here, sir," the haughty commander replied,
"To care for the subjects of Humbert, beside
His interests no other have I. As for you,
Your queen must protect her own subjects, adieu !"

Dawn broke, the Boyne's furnaces reddened like gore,
The steam from her safety valves hissed, and before
The sun's rising the ship's crew were all on the deck.
Soon out through the mists, they discovered a speck
Pricking out from the haze, fast it grew, 'mid the din.
"Bring my glass," cried the Captain. "A ship's coming in !"

He leveled his glasses—"Now, Heaven be praised,
'Tis the white Minneapolis." Then how they raised
Three wild British cheers for the Stripes and the Stars
O'er America's warship, those brave British tars !

Then quickly the gig from her davits was swung,
And their ensign reversed from the halyards was hung,
It was all understood ere the rippling tide
Brought the Captain along to the great warship's side
Where the strong "Jacob's ladder" was dropped, and it
seemed
Like the vision of old, when the Patriarch dreamed
Of the succoring angels. His story was told,
And a friend he soon found in the Admiral bold.

"Those men, every one, you shall carry from port
If I bombard the town and riddle their fort,"
Spake the Admiral. Then, "Man a barge, let all join"
(Was his order) "to save refugees on the Boyne."
Soon the Boyne shipped her cables, and sailing forth free,
The white Minneapolis bore her to sea,
Till safely from port she could trust her to go
To the land where th' oppressor no harbor can know.

Then a farewell she gave, and three loud rousing cheers
Rose over the waters to gladden the ears
Of England's brave sailors, and then three times three
For America's braves wafted over the sea !
But as good Captain Fisher steamed up New York Bay
His papers were wanting, and all he could say
Was to tell just this story—how *Selfridge* and he
Brought the stricken Armenians over the sea.

Old England, we all know, believes in *Free Trade*,
But we're sure that whenever request shall be made
For American *Protection* 'twill ever be given
As freely as air or as sunshine from heaven !

—*The Congregationalist*, Dec. 3, 1896.